



# GEELONG EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SUN PROTECTION POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Geelong East Primary School on 5248 4885.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support sun protection behaviours at Geelong East Primary School to minimise risk of health problems from sun overexposure, including skin cancer.

This policy provides guidelines to:

- support staff and students to use a combination of sun protection measures when UV index levels are 3 or above (generally mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- ensure that there are outdoor environments that provide adequate shade for students and staff
- ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills to help them to be responsible for their own protection
- support our school's strategies to meet its duty of care and occupational health and safety obligations to minimise harmful UV exposure and associated harm for students and staff.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities on and off-site, including camps and excursions. It is applicable to all students and staff.

### POLICY

Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause health problems including sunburn, damage to skin and eyes, and an increased risk of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

UV radiation:

- cannot be seen or felt
- can be reflected off surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, water, sand and snow
- can pass through light clouds
- varies in intensity across the day and the year (highest from mid-August to the end of April in Victoria)
- peaks during school hours.

Sun safety is a shared responsibility and staff, parents and students are encouraged to implement a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 or above. Information about the daily local sun protection times is available via the SunSmart widget on the school's website/intranet, the free SunSmart app, or at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au).

Geelong East Primary School has the following measures in place for all outdoor activities during the daily sun protection times to help reduce the risk of over-exposure to UV radiation for staff and students.

### 1. Shade

Geelong East Primary School provides sufficient options for shelter and trees to provide shade on school grounds, particularly in places such as:

- a shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade
- School Council makes sure there is sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in the areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- In consultation with the school council, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

### 2. Sun protective uniform/clothing

- sun-protective clothing, is included in our school uniform/dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric. It includes shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts.

### 3. Hats

- From mid-August to 30 April, all students and staff are required to wear a sun protective hat that shades the face, neck and ears for all outdoor activities. Hats may also be worn for all outdoor activities outside of the August to April time period, by parent or student choice.
- Baseball or peaked caps and sun visors are not considered a suitable alternative, as they do not protect the ears, cheeks or neck.
- Students who are not wearing appropriate protective clothing or hats will be asked to use available areas of shade when outdoors or a suitable area protected from the sun.

### 4. Sunscreen

- Geelong East Primary School encourages all staff and students to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen daily whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.
- Sunscreen should be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied every two hours (or more frequently if sweating or swimming).
- No student or staff member will be required by the school to sunscreen against their wishes, but both are expected to wear sunsmart hats and students may be required to remain in shaded areas if no hat or appropriate clothing is supplied –“No hat no play”
- Staff and students may use their own personal sunscreen as opposed to school-supplied sunscreen, but colored zinc styled creams etc. will generally not be permissible.

## Curriculum

- Students at our school are encouraged to make healthy choices. They are supported to understand effects of sun exposure and are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole school.
- Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in the curriculum for all year levels

- Sunsmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment

UV radiation exposure is considered as part of our school's risk management and assessment for all outdoor events and activities, i.e. UV radiation protection strategies are included in school camp activities, excursions, sports days and interschool sports events.

#### Staff OHS and Role Modelling

Staff are encouraged to access resources, tools, and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote sun smart behaviour across the school community As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff:

- Wear protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- Apply SPF 30+ or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- Seek shade whenever possible

#### Families and visitors

Families and visitors participating in and attending outdoor school activities are encouraged to:

- wear a sun-protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses;
- apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen; and
- seek shade whenever possible when outdoors.

#### Community engagement

Sun protection behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.

Families, students and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies to support UV safety at school and at home. Geelong East Primary School may provide information through newsletters, noticeboards, school website, school assemblies.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website (or insert other online parent/carer/student communication method)
- Referred to in staff induction processes
- Referred to in transition and enrolment programs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Discussed in student forums
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
  - [Sun and UV Protection Policy](#)
  - [Heat Health](#)
  - [Outdoor Activities and Working Outdoors](#)
  - [Risk Management – Schools](#)

- [Shade Sails](#)
- [Student Dress Code](#)
- [SunSmart](#) and Cancer Council Victoria.
  - [Primary schools](#) free education resources, sample policies and information about the free [SunSmart Schools Program](#).
  - [Secondary schools](#) free education resources and sample policies.
  - [Sunscreen reactions](#).

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2023
Consultation	Staff through briefing Administration meetings on processes School Council meeting
Approved by	Principal – Karen Chaston
Next scheduled review date	May 2025 or if there are significant changes made that require a revision